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Today's issue of PD

Pharmacy Daily today features three pages of the latest news, plus a full page from **Pointrs**.

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Shingrix on NIP

THE National Immunisation Program (NIP) has expanded access to GSK's Shingrix vaccine for Australians aged 18 to 64 who are at moderate-to-high risk of shingles due to underlying conditions.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation recommended the expansion, which aims to help those with compromised immune systems.

Crohn's and Colitis Australia CEO, Leanne Raven, supported the expansion, noting that people with autoimmune conditions are at greater risk.

GSK Australia's Dr Alan Paul echoed these sentiments, praising the gov't's decision to protect high-risk groups from the painful viral infection.

"This NIP expansion is evidence that the government is committed to providing more protection for those adults considered at increased risk of herpes zoster when it comes to vaccine preventable diseases like shingles," commented Dr Paul.

Clean sweep in retail prize



PHARMACY 4 Less has dominated this year's Finder Customer Satisfaction Awards on Fri, sweeping all four categories in the pharmacy sector: most loved, most trusted, top value, and legendary customer service.

Pharmacy 4 Less led with a 4.3/5 score for both customer service and value for money, and an impressive 97% trustworthiness rating, revealed Finder.

"This clean sweep showcases Pharmacy 4 Less' commitment to delivering exceptional service and value," said Finder's retail specialist, Chris Jager.

Finder, which worked with research partner Dynata to poll over 10,000 Australians, saw six pharmacy brands qualify by meeting the minimum number of brand responses, including TerryWhite Chemmart, Blooms The Chemist, Priceline Pharmacy, Amcal and Chemist Warehouse (CW).

TerryWhite Chemmart and Blooms The Chemist were highly commended with both brands securing top ratings of 4.3/5 for product quality.

Chemist Warehouse had a

strong year in the makeup retailer category, winning three of four awards: most loved, most trusted and top value.

CW had an incredibly strong 'value for money' score (4.6/5) and 100% of respondents said the brand was trustworthy within the makeup retailer category.

The group also had equal top scores with beauty retailer Mecca for product range (4.5/5) and product quality (4.5/5).

Jager noted that trust, service, and value are key drivers in today's market, with these pharmacy groups leading the charge.

"Pharmacy 4 Less' clean sweep sets a new benchmark in customer service, but all brands continue to raise the standard of care in the community," he said.

"Currently a lot of Aussies are tightening their purse strings, and they really are seeking value - whether that's through price matching, loyalty programs or just good quality products at affordable prices, and I really want to commend the companies that are meeting their customers' needs at this time," said Jager. *JG*

Hope for pain

LAST Fri was the inaugural Wear It Red Day, a new initiative by PainAustralia, aimed at raising awareness for the millions living with chronic pain.

Community pharmacies across Australia displayed red balloons and posters to show support for those affected.

PainAustralia CEO Giulia Jones emphasised the day's mission: to highlight the essential role of pharmacies in providing effective pain management for Australians.

"People living with chronic pain often feel invisible," Jones said.

"Chronic pain affects one in five Australians over 25, yet many suffer in silence due to stigma," she added.

Research shows that 40% of Australians in pain consider discussing it taboo.

By participating in Wear It Red Day, pharmacists aim to foster open conversations about pain management.

Jones urged anyone experiencing pain to visit their local pharmacy for support, stating, "we want to show that there is hope and that health professionals can help".

The event received sponsorship from Panadol and support from the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, reinforcing the importance of addressing chronic pain in communities.



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Reviews

ACCC slams formula code

THE Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) has proposed denying authorisation for the Infant Nutrition Council's (INC) industry code, which restricts advertising of infant formula.

The ACCC stated the code no longer provides enough public benefits to outweigh potential detriments.

The INC is seeking a five-year extension for the *Marketing in Australia of Infant Formula: Manufacturers and Importers Agreement* (MAIF Agreement), a voluntary self-regulatory code established in 1992.

The agreement restricts companies from advertising infant formula for children aged under 12 months, aligning with Australia's obligations as a signatory to the World Health Organization's code on marketing breast milk substitutes.

"The link between breastfeeding and better health outcomes for mothers and children is undisputed," said ACCC Deputy Chair Mick Keogh.

However, the ACCC is concerned about the MAIF Agreement's voluntary nature and limited scope to address modern marketing techniques, like social media influencers and algorithms.

In 2021, the ACCC granted a three-year extension to the agreement, but warned that public detriment might outweigh benefits if the extension continued.

A recent independent review commissioned by the Department of Health and Aged Care found the MAIF Agreement was no longer effective and recommended a legislated, mandatory code.

"Effective government regulation of infant formula marketing would likely deliver better public health outcomes," said Keogh.

The ACCC has granted interim authorisation for the MAIF Agreement to continue while a final decision is made.

Submissions on the draft determination are open until 17 Oct 2024. *JG*

NSW pharmacists gain new forum



THE Pharmacy Stakeholder Forum, a collaborative initiative between the Pharmacy Council of NSW, the NSW Ministry of Health, and key pharmacy organisations, has been established to support pharmacists across the state.

The forum aims to address regulatory issues impacting the governance and performance of pharmacists and pharmacy owners in NSW.

The objectives include identifying key communication messages to assist pharmacists

in understanding their various legal obligations, responsibilities, policies, and guidelines.

It also seeks to foster collaboration in promoting clinical governance and legislative compliance.

Forum representatives are currently developing resources to aid NSW pharmacists, designed as tools to complement their professional knowledge and independent practice.

These resources aim to enhance communication and compliance within the industry.

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Dispensary Corner

RESEARCHERS have discovered that flavonoids, found in brightly coloured foods like berries, leafy greens, tea, dark chocolate, and red wine, might just help keep your brain in shape.

In fact, they say the more you indulge in these foods, the lower your risk of dementia - especially if you're already at higher risk due to genetics, high blood pressure, or depression.

A study of over 120,000 UK adults aged between 40 to 70 showed that out of the 882 who developed dementia, the flavonoid fans fared much better.

Apparently, those who frequently sipped tea, nibbled on berries, and savoured red wine had sharper minds.

While the researchers can't officially declare that a glass of red wine or a piece of dark chocolate is your ticket to eternal mental clarity, they're hinting it doesn't hurt.

So, the next time someone catches you with a berry smoothie in one hand and a chocolate bar in the other, just tell them it's all part of your new brain-boosting routine.

Top nutraceutical award



KANEKA Ubiquinol has won the prestigious Healthy Ageing Ingredient of the Year at the NutraIngredients-Asia Awards 2024.

The award acknowledged Kaneka Corporation as a global leader in the nutraceutical industry, celebrated for its contribution to healthy ageing.

The company stated Kaneka Ubiquinol is backed by over 100 studies, 80 global patents, and more than 45 years of research, supporting its benefits for mitochondrial and cardiovascular health, cognition, fertility, and overall vitality.

The award highlights its precision science, innovative solutions, and reliable Japanese manufacturing.

Award judges stated that the NutraIngredients-Asia Awards Healthy Ageing category "looks to celebrate the best the industry

has to offer in tailored solutions, to remain physically and mentally healthy as we age, supported by solid scientific evidence, to demonstrate a unique nutritional solution to this need or problem".

Gary Scattergood, Regional Head, William Reed Business Media and Editor-in-Chief, *NutraIngredients-Asia*, praised the healthy ageing supplement's "reliability, strong clinical evidence, and commercial success".

Tsuyoshi Takakuwa, Head of Marketing and Sales, expressed the company's gratitude, saying, "this award is a testament to our R&D team's decades of analytical work on Ubiquinol's essential role in mitochondrial health and healthy ageing". JG

Pictured: Kaneka Corporation's Takakuwa, Scattergood, Sales and Marketing Head Kazuki Takita.

Dementia challenge

TO mark Dementia Action Week, three key publications last Fri highlighted the urgent need to address the challenges faced by individuals living with the illness.

They were Dementia Australia's discussion paper, Neuroscience Research Australia and the *Lancet Regional Health-Western Pacific Journal's* series, and Alzheimer's Disease International's (ADI) *World Alzheimer's Report 2024*.

The reports reveal worsening stigma around dementia among the public and healthcare professionals, which can delay diagnosis and treatment.

ADI CEO Paola Barbarino stressed the need for better understanding of the illness as a medical condition.

Dementia Australia CEO Prof Tanya Buchanan said that dementia is a critical chronic disease of the 21st century.

"We need mass public health campaigns, improved diagnoses, and support to create more dementia-friendly communities," she said.

Buchanan called for a National Dementia Action Plan, urging, "the time to act is now".

Check out the latest in Beauty & Wellness

Every Thursday in *Pharmacy Daily*

Do you have a beauty or wellness product? Send it [HERE](#) for consideration.

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Editor - Jayamala Gupte
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Journalists - Adam Bishop, Myles Stedman, Janie Medbury
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Publisher - Damian Francis
Associate Publisher - Jo-Anne Hui-Miller

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ADVERTISING AND MARKETING

Head of Sales & Marketing - Sean Harrigan
Advertising - Laura Aghajanian & Dante Muranty
advertising@pharmacydaily.com.au

Head of Operations & Contributing Editor - Anna Piper

ACCOUNTS

accounts@traveldaily.com.au

Suite 1, Level 2, 64 Talavera Rd
Macquarie Park NSW 2113 Australia
Tel: 1300 799 220 (+61 2 8007 6760)

info@pharmacydaily.com.au

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